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AN

ADDRESS

TO THE

MOST WORSHIPFUL

GRAND LODGE

OF

MASSACHUSETTS,

BY

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BROTHER ISAIAH THOMAS, ESQ, P. G. M.

AT THE

CLOSE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL TERM OF HIS PRESIDING AS GRAND MASTER, A. L. 5805.

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ADDRESS.

MY RESPECTED BRETHREN,

AGREEABLY to our Constitution, I am now to leave the dignified station, to which by your partiality I have been unanimously elected for three successive years; and to close my masonic labors, as an officer of the Grand Lodge. The honor you have conferred on me will not be forgotten. I shall ever hold it in grateful remembrance.

I regret that the duties of the office, I have held, have not been executed more agreeably to my wishes, and to your interest; but so far, as my judgment has extended, and my other various occupations would allow, I have, with the assistance of my brethren in office, endeavoured to discharge those duties, as well, as circumstances would permit.

The morning Sun of Masonry first beamed on the American world in A. L. 5733. The records of the first Lodge, which for thirty years had been missing, have lately been fortunately recovered.

In January, A. L. 5772, and for many years preceding, there were *two* Grand Lodges, and those had only ten lodges under their jurisdiction in the then province of Massachusetts Bay. In January 5782, there were thirteen Lodges; in January 5792, seventeen Lodges. *This* year was with us a new

era in Masonry. The sages of our fraternity, by their wisdom and joint exertions, happily effected the union of the two Grand Lodges, and consolidated their powers. Since that period Masonry has rapidly advanced. In January 5802 there were 66 Lodges, and there are now 85 under the government of this Grand Lodge, viz. 82 in this commonwealth and 3 in other States. The oldest of these Lodges, and the first in America (St. John's) was chartered by the Grand Lodge of England; two were chartered during the administration of Grand Master Gridley; two during that of G. M. Rowe; three by G. M. Joseph Warren; two by G. M. John Warren; five by G. M. Webb; two by G. M. Hayes; seven by G. M. Cutler; twenty three by G. M. Revere; six by G. M. Bartlett; nineteen by G. M. Dunn, and thirteen during the present administration. From A. L. 5740 to 5794 several *other* Lodges were chartered in this commonwealth, but the charters were either given up or forfeited. A number of charters were also granted during that period to hold Lodges in other States, and from them originated most of the Lodges now in those States.

Brethren,

THE important regulations of A. L. 5803, are carried into effect, and already have been productive of essential benefit. A regular communition between the Grand Lodge and the Lodges

under its jurisdiction is established. The want of that communication had been the cause of much complaint. The Lodges are now divided into twelve Districts, and a like number of District Deputy Grand Masters have been annually appointed, commissioned, and instructed. I am happy to say those officers have attended to their duty, and made regular returns. The masonic band is strengthened throughout the commonwealth. Order and regularity prevail, and many serious evils are corrected.

A number of Lodges had never been constituted, nor the officers of those Lodges installed. The degree of the Chair was unknown to some of the Masters of them, and of course, the obligations so necessary for the well being of the fraternity were *never* administered. Particular inquiry into this business has been made, and the Lodges chartered since the union of the two Grand Lodges are now, nearly all, amply or duly constituted, &c.

While on the subject of constituting Lodges, you will permit me to remark that it is essentially necessary, that every new Lodge should be constituted within a year from the date of its charter; because all the officers are chosen annually; and if the first Master has not received the degree of the chair, and taken the obligation of a Master of a Lodge, how can he confer that degree, or give the obligation to his successor? It is certainly as necessary to take the obligation of a Master of a Lodge, as it is to

take any other degree in Masonry. The order and regularity of a Lodge rest in a great measure upon the performance of this important transaction. Besides the constitution, Chap. 5. Sect. 1. determines, that "No new Lodge shall be acknowledged, nor can its officers be admitted into the Grand Lodge, until such new Lodge is regularly constituted and registered by authority of the Grand Lodge."

A list of such Lodges, as have not been constituted, will be communicated to you by the Grand Secretary.

A register of all the Lodges, stating when they were chartered, and in whose administration; their times and places of regular meeting; when they were constituted, by whom, &c. is nearly completed. The completion of this register will, I doubt not, be effected by our successors in office.

The *grades* of the several Lodges under this jurisdiction are now determined according to the universally established ancient custom of the craft; i. e. agreeably to the constitution, Chap. 2. Sect. 11. and therefore cannot fail to give general satisfaction.

The Bye-Laws of many Lodges are not well calculated to answer the purpose intended. Errors have crept into one code, and have thence been copied into another. A standard, sanctioned by the Grand Lodge, has been often requested; and to that standard it is proposed to add, by each Lodge, such articles as its local situation, and other peculiar circumstances, may require. Only few of the Bye-

Laws of the respective Lodges have been presented to you for inspection and approbation; but we have caused copies to be taken, and have nearly collected the whole, that they may be examined by a committee, and such measures taken respecting them, as you may judge to be proper and necessary for the general welfare of the fraternity. The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, and other Grand Lodges, have appointed committees to inspect the Bye-Laws of the Lodges subordinate to them, and to amend such as require amendment.

Proxies should be chosen and commissioned annually. The names of these proxies, and the dates of their commissions, should be registered. When the distances of Lodges from the Grand Lodge, or other causes, make it *inconvenient* for the Masters and Wardens to attend quarterly communications, and render it requisite to choose proxies to represent them, it is as necessary that those proxies be chosen *annually*, as the office bearers of the Lodges. It sometimes has been difficult to determine whether the Lodges were or were not represented by proxy. The constitutions do not allow any brother to represent more than one Lodge. See Part 1. Chap. 1. Sect. 11.

Among the advantages arising from the regulation of A. L. 5803, that of our funds should not pass unnoticed. In December 5803 the sum in the hands of the Treasurer, after the annual settlement, was 73 dollars; at this time it is about 2000 dollars.

A regular communication with the several Grand Lodges in the United States, Nova Scotia, Canada, and the Grand Lodge in England, and others in Europe, has been effected. The advantages of such communications are so obvious, that it is needless for me to name them.

The special rules and regulations of several Grand Lodges have been obtained, as also the history, constitution, laws and regulations of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. These will probably aid you in determining the questions that have arisen respecting the rank of District Deputy Grand Masters, and their right of voting in the Grand Lodge, &c. These are questions which are important, and the sooner they are determined and settled, the better.

A regular and uniform mode of work in the three degrees of our order, agreeably to ancient forms and venerated landmarks, so much desired, and so often requested, is now taking place, not only in the Lodges of this commonwealth, but in other States; particularly New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Maryland, Virginia, and Kentucky. This mode tends to restore the sublime art to its original excellence, by diffusing the genuine ancient principles of our order, and is already attended with pleasing effects.

Conformably to a vote of the Grand Lodge, jewels have been prepared for the District Deputy Grand Masters.

The jewels for the officers of this Lodge, wanted new collars, &c. They have been attended to, and are ready for the investment of the officers now to be chosen.

I have the pleasure to observe, that the difficulties this Lodge has experienced are principally removed. The genius and spirit of Masonry are prevalent throughout the jurisdiction; and harmony and good order in the several Lodges is noticed in the returns of the respective District Deputy Grand Masters. The slight murmurs of discontent in some distant districts are, I trust, hushed forever. Good Masons need only *light* to bring them upon the *square*, and to keep themselves within the *compass* of the principles of our ancient constitutions. The Lodges, extended through a large territory, have but *one common interest;* they will therefore adhere to their parent Lodge, as to the rock of their preservation; and, reflecting on their relative situation, will determine to support, under the guidance of reason, that power which gave them being, that general government, through whose commanding protection, respectability, regularity and permanency, with their numerous train of benefits, will be secured to them, and descend to their successors.

A few things are yet to be accomplished which, without doubt, will be duly attended to. Among those of minor consequence, is the furniture of the Grand Lodge. This Lodge is, indeed, badly fur-

nished. We own scarcely any thing but the jewels for our officers. Many necessaries, I am informed, we are obliged to borrow; but perhaps it may be well to postpone a supply of furniture till we have a *proper place* wherein to deposit the same.

The article which appears to be most essentially necessary for us, is the erection of a proper building to assemble in. This business you have not neglected; it has been attended to so far as to choose *two* committees; *one* whose object was, to endeavour to obtain an act of the General Court for the purpose of enabling us to hold sufficient land, whereon to erect such a building as may be necessary for the purpose intended; the other committee to project ways and means to enable you to erect such a building. The first committee, though unsuccessful in their late application, I am assured will exert themselves to obtain an act in favour of their petition the present session of the General Court. The committee on ways and means have reported, and it is a prevalent opinion that there will be no difficulty in providing means to erect a building, that will do credit to the fraternity. When you possess a hall, you will, unquestionably, be able to furnish it.

The next thing, of importance, is the establishment of a fund for charity :—rules and orders for such an institution are contained in part 4. chap. 4. of the book of constitutions. When this establishment is effected, a greater display will be afforded of the beauties of Masonry, and its superior excellence

to every other society in the community, by the benefits it will render, not only to distressed brethren, their widows and orphans, but to the great family of man.

These things accomplished, we shall have the pleasing reflection, that the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts is on as respectable a basis, as any of its sister Grand Lodges in the United States, and will realize the benefits attendant on the enjoyment of general prosperity.

Let us then, my brethren, all join in supporting the Grand Pillar of our order, erected by our ancient and revered predecessors ; let us prize it as the ark of our safety, and esteem it as the *covenant* of our felicity. To effect this, " if we have animosities, let us banish them ; if party spirit, let us melt it down ;" and cast from us, with abhorrence, all odious distinctions ; these can never dwell in the breast of a real Mason.

My brother officers will please to accept my thanks for the aid they have afforded me so readily, on all occasions. I feel happy in being now able to remark, and this consideration will hereafter be to me a source of pleasing reflection, that *at no time* hath *discord*, or the baneful spirit of division, interfered to disturb our united endeavours to promote the general good of the fraternity.

Brethren,

May the celestial genius of Masonry be the constant attendant of my successors, and infuse into their minds a large portion of its ethereal

spirit, to be employed for the common interest of the Lodges under their government. May they watch with an equal and comprehensive *eye* over the numerous masonic communities; *enlighten* them by their *wisdom*, *strengthen* their foundations, and *beautify* the interior and exterior of their temples. By joint councils and joint efforts control every thing that can be injurious to the fraternity, promote brotherly love, harmony and order, and cherish all the virtues which should distinguish us as brethren of one great family, and thereby contribute to the immortality of Masonry.

Brethren,

WISHING you may be unanimous in all your proceedings, particularly in your election of officers this evening, and that the blessing of our *Supreme* Grand Master may rest upon you, and the Lodges under your care and protection, I bid you, most affectionately, farewell!

SO MOTE IT BE.

Grand Lodge

OF THE

MOST ANCIENT AND HONOURABLE SOCIETY OF

FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

OF THE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,

IN UNION WITH THE MOST ANCIENT AND HONOURABLE GRAND LODGES IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND IN EUROPE, &c. ACCORDING TO THE OLD CONSTITUTIONS :

Hon. and Most Worshipful JOSIAH BARTLETT, Esq.

GRAND MASTER.

At the Annual Communication, held at MASON'S HALL, Boston, on the tenth day of December, A. L. 5810.

PRESENT.

Hon. & Most W. JOSIAH BARTLETT, Esq. *Grand Master.*
R. W. FRANCIS J. OLIVER, Esq. *Sen. Grand Warden.*
R. W. OLIVER PRESCOTT, Esq. *Jun. Grand Warden.*
R. W. ANDREW SIGOURNEY, *Grand Treasurer.*
W. JOHN PROCTOR, *Grand Secretary.*
R. W. BENJAMIN RUSSELL, Esq. *Grand Marshal.*
W. JOHN B. HAMMATT, *Sen. Grand Deacon.*
W. ROBERT LASH, jun. *Junior Grand Deacon.*
R. W. THOMAS REDMAN, *Grand Sword Bearer.*
R. W. JOB DREW, *First Grand Steward.*
R. W. MICHAEL ROULSTONE, *Second Grand Steward.*
R. W. JOHN BAKER, *Grand Pursuivant.*
Brother WILLIAM EATON, *Grand Tiler.*

With Past Grand Masters, and other Past Grand Officers,—the District Deputy Grand Masters from the 1st, 2d, 5th, and 9th, Districts, and the Representatives of the following Lodges under the jurisdiction, viz.—

St. John's, *of Boston.*
St. Andrew's *do.*
Tyrian, *Gloucester.*
Trinity, *Lancaster.*
Massachusetts, *Boston.*
St. Peter's, *Newburyport.*
St. George's, *Warren.*
K. Solomon's, *Charlestown.*
Unity, *Ipswich.*
Essex, *Salem.*
Friendship, *Williamstown.*
Lincoln, *Wiscasset.*
Federal, *Blanford.*
Morning Star, *Worcester.*
Middlesex, *Framingham.*
Columbian, *Boston.*
Washington, *Roxbury.*
Kennebeck, *Hallowell.*
Fayette, *Charlton.*
Harmony, *Northfield.*
Union, *Dorchester.*
Jerusalem, *Williamsburg.*
St. Paul's, *Groton.*
Fellowship, *Bridgewater.*
Meridian, *Watertown.*
Corinthian, *Concord.*
Montgomery, *Franklin.*
Olive Branch, *Oxford.*
Mount Moriah, *Reading.*
Philanthropic, *Marblehead.*
Mount Zion, *Hardwick.*
Mount Lebanon, *Boston.*
Pacifick, *Leverett.*
Aurora, *Leominster.*
Eastern Star, *Rehoboth.*
Rural, *Quincy.*
Sumner, *Dennis.*
United, *Topsham.*
Charity, *Mendon.*
Cumberland, *New-Gloucester.*
Sheffield, *Sheffield.*
Mount Carmel, *Lynn.*
Amicable, *Camb. Port.*
Oxford, *Paris.*
Ancient Landmark, *Portland.*
Rising Sun, *Sandisfield.*
Jordan, *Danvers.*

The Grand Lodge was opened in ample form.—A number of communications were presented and read from several Grand Lodges in Europe, and from many Grand Lodges in the United States, and other parts of America.

Many committees made reports, and the usual business relative to the affairs of this Grand Lodge, and the numerous Lodges under their jurisdiction, was completed previous to the election of Grand Officers for the ensuing year.

The hour prescribed by the constitution for that purpose having arrived, the Grand Lodge proceeded to the election of Grand Officers for the year ensuing :—On taking the ballots, it appeared that the result was as follows :

Hon. & M. W. *Timothy Bigelow*, Grand Master.
R. W. *Francis J. Oliver*, Senior Grand Warden.

R. W. *Benjamin Russell, Esq.* Jun. Grand Warden.
R. W. *Andrew Sigourney*, Grand Treasurer.
W. *John Proctor*, Grand Recording Secretary.

All which were proclaimed to be constitutionally elected, by the Grand Marshal.

The Grand Lodge was adjourned to the 17th inst. then to meet in Mason's Hall for the installation of the Grand Officers, and other masonic purposes.

MASONS' HALL, Boston, Dec. 17th, 5810.

The Grand Lodge was opened in ample form by the Hon. and M. W. *Josiah Bartlett, Esq.* Grand Master, who invested and installed the Grand Master elect for the year ensuing. The Grand Wardens, Grand Treasurer, and Grand Secretary, were then severally invested from the Chair, and the following appointments were made by the Most Worshipful Grand Master.

R. W. *Samuel Bradford, Esq.* Deputy Grand Master.
Rev. and R. W. *Asa Eaton*, Grand Chaplain.
Rev. & R. W. *John Bartlett*, Corresponding Grand Secretary.
R. W. *Henry Fowle*, Grand Marshal.
R. W. *John B. Hammatt*, Senior Grand Deacon.
R. W. *Job Drew*, Junior Grand Deacon.
R. W. *Thomas Redman*, Grand Sword Bearer.
R. W. *Michael Roulstone*, *Ephraim Beaman*, *Andrew Roulstone and Benjamin Ingals*, Grand Stewards.
W. *Joseph Batson*, *and Benjamin Burchstead*, Grand Pursuivants.
Brother *William Eaton*, Grand Tyler.

All of whom present were duly invested and charged by the M. W. Grand Master ;—and the Grand Lodge was declared by the Grand Marshal to be duly organized for the following year.

The M. G. M. has been pleased to appoint the following R. W. brethren D. D. G. Masters for the year 1811, viz.

R. W. *John Dixwell*, Boston, for the first District.
R. W. *Joseph Baker*, Salem, second do.
Rev. R. W. *Jotham Waterman*, Barnstable, third do.
R. W. *James Ellis*, Rehoboth, fourth do.
R. W. *John Abbot*, Westford, fifth do.

Rev. & R. W. *James Thompson*, Barre, sixth District.
R. W. *John Phelps*, Granville, seventh do.
R. W. *Robert Walker*, Windsor, eighth do.
R. W. *James D. Hopkins*, Portland, ninth do.
R. W. *Samuel Thatcher*, Warren, tenth do.
R. W. *Oliver Shead*, Eastport, eleventh do.
R. W. *John Brock*, Nantucket, twelfth do.

The following are Extracts from the Records of the proceedings of the Grand Lodge for the past year.

Upon the petition of the Rising Star Lodge, it was voted, that said Lodge be removed from Stoughton to Canton.

Upon the petition of Sylvan Lodge voted, that the name of said Lodge be changed to Friendly Society Lodge, and that the meetings thereof be alternately at Southwick and Springfield.

Upon the petition of the Marine Lodge at Falmouth, the charter thereof was resumed, to be retained in the hands of the D. D. G. M. of the third Masonick District, to be restored upon proper application.

Mystic Lodge, at Lanesborough, was constituted in form, July 12th, A. L. 5810.

Jordan Lodge at Danvers was constituted in ample form, September 26th, A. L. 5810.

Charters have been granted, since the last annual communication, for the following Lodges under this jurisdiction, viz.—

Fredonia Lodge, at Northborough, in the County of Worcester.
Mystic Lodge, at Lanesborough, in the County of Berkshire.

☞ Communications for the M. W. Grand Lodge of Massachusetts may be addressed to the Rev. and R. W. John Bartlett, Corresponding G. Secretary, at Marblehead; or to W. John Proctor, Recording Grand Secretary, No. 89, Orange Street, Boston.

Attest, JOHN PROCTOR, *Grand Secretary.*